

Jeffrey R. Burnside, P.A.

Attorney at Law

Licensed in Florida and Georgia

jeff@jrburnsidelaw.com

PH: 561.531.4425

FAX: 888.788.9002

October 16, 2013

**The Honorable Henry E. Autrey
United States District Court Judge**

**Thomas F. Eagleton Courthouse
111 S. 10th Street
Saint Louis, Missouri 63102**

**Re: United States of America v. Jeffrey Ellerbeck
Cause No.: 4:13-cr-58 HEA (SPM)**

Dear Judge Autrey:

Please accept this correspondence as unconditional and formal support for Jeffrey Ryan Ellerbeck. My wife and I have had the pleasure of Jeff's friendship for several years and we are shocked to hear of his crime. Not only shocked at how desperate he must have been, but shocked at how far out of character he was willing to travel.

Jeff and I have grown very close over the years. Jeff has an open invitation to our home, is a weekly guest, and he is choice company for any and all events in our lives. Jeff and I have bonded over many things including his affinity for cycling (he even rides in the snow), architecture, Premier League soccer and where to find the best hamburger in Denver. My wife, who is a better conversationalist and far more intelligent than I, loves to spend time with Jeff discussing his deep-rooted religion, his family and why I shouldn't be eating hamburgers. The most accurate glimpse I can offer is when Jeff gave us our greatest compliment.

It's easy to imagine that visiting a new mother in the hospital can be hit-or-miss as childbirth, and medical issues in general, are intensely personal. Our child was born on June 29, 2013. On June 30, 2013, just a few hours after our son was born, Jeff arrived to the hospital with a great big smile, carrying flowers and my wife's favorite chocolate. I know it was difficult for Jeff to visit because he is so careful to avoid offending anyone; he knew how much it would mean to Rachael and I and Jeff made it happen. It may not be unusual to visit someone in the hospital but it is quintessential Jeff to visit first, with a big smile and a warm heart. Jeff never has a harsh word to say. Jeff is the first to lend a hand. Jeff has a strong sense of right and wrong and frankly, this is the first I've seen him waver. Jeff was the first and only friend to visit us in our most personal moment and we are not surprised. He is worthy of that memory with us, and we are thankful to share those first moments with him. I know that Jeff has many long-lasting friendships and in meeting those other fortunate people, I've heard them all share the same stories. Stories about lending his vehicle for weeks on end, stories of helping friends move from apartment to apartment too many times to count. Most often I hear how Jeff leaves the keys to his apartment when he's away so that a traveling friend always has a place to stay. Simply put, Jeff is wonderful person. He has earned respect from so many of us and we are proud he considers us his friends.

I have been a parent for a few months and it did not take long for my perception and priority of so many things to change. Primarily, the environment and society to which my son is exposed has become paramount and safety is a constant concern. That said, we are proud to have Jeff as part of our son's life. If my son can absorb Jeff's honor, kindness, generosity, respect, benevolence, integrity, honesty and virtue, I will be a proud father. I believe strongly that if more people shared Jeff's character, this world would be a better place.

Jeff has made changes in his life to ensure he is no longer at risk of repeating his criminal behavior. Jeff is on a career path that he can be proud of and during this probationary period, I have seen him redirect and focus his talent toward a great future. Please do not hesitate to contact me if can offer any other assurances on Jeff's behalf.

Very Truly Yours,

Jeffrey R. Burnside, Esquire

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Saint Louis, Missouri 63102**

**Re: United States of America v. Jeffery Ellerbeck
Cause No.: 4:13-cr-58 HEA (SPM)**

Your Honor,

It is my privilege to write to you on behalf of Mr. Jeff Ellerbeck. My name is Alan Stroeve and I have known Jeff since we first crossed paths in the fall of 2000 and immediately became the best of friends. I was a combat medic in the United States Army for eight years and I currently work as a critical care paramedic for Humboldt General Hospital in Winnemucca, NV. Mr. Ellerbeck and I have known each other for a significant amount of time and I must say he is an individual who is one of the more caring and compassionate people I have known in my life. Time and time again when I personally struggled with career changes, geographical changes, and marital status changes, Jeff was always there offering assistance in one form or another and doing what he could help me in my greatest times of struggles. Myself and several other mutual friends can attest to Jeff's unconditional help, caring, and support for those around him who he cares deeply for.

Jeff has been an outstanding member of his community for many years involved in public cleanup projects of local neighborhoods, play grounds, and dog parks. Moreover, Jeff has is known and trusted by his community and neighbors.

I am fully aware of the charges, the seriousness of his offense, and understand Jeff has taken full responsibility of his actions. I ask the court not to look at this single event to define an individual, his life's work, and contribution to society. Let the record show this is Mr. Ellerbeck's one and only offense and given the circumstances surrounding

**Alan R. Stroeve B.S., A.S., FP-C, CCP-C, NREMT-P
U.S.A.R. (Ret)
1025 South Bridge Street
Winnemucca, NV 89445**

The Honorable Henry E. Autrey
United States District Court Judge
Thomas F. Eagleton Courthouse
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Saint Louis, Missouri 63102

Re: United States of America v. Jeffrey Ellerbeck
Cause No.: 4:13-cr-58 HEA (SPM)

Your Honor:

Jeff Ellerbeck has been one of my closest and dearest friends for the past 27 years, since my Dad retired from 20 years as an active duty Judge Advocate General officer to return to Omaha the start of my junior year in high school. I met Jeff playing soccer that Fall and we've been through thick and thin ever since. As our family helped Jeff cope with his, my parents came to consider Jeff almost a second son.

I write urging the court's utmost consideration for a kind, earnest and harmless man who followed the wrong opportunities abundantly around him at a time when he had left his moorings. Jeff lost the only real father figure he had in 2004, leaving a vacuum in his family that I believe was his mother's most important stabilizing influence. That has culminated recently in Jeff's family being torn apart leaving him as the only connection that keeps them together.

Fr. James Hoff was on the faculty at Creighton University when Jeff's dad died. He came to adopt the family and to look after them, celebrating holidays with them in his later years as he lost his own family. He was a tremendously positive influence. The college president and spiritual leader always had time for the Ellerbecks.

I love his mom Judi and she's one of the kindest, most devout and willingly naive women you will ever meet, but she can be quite detached from reality when it comes to her family, widowed since Jeff was quite young. I know his brothers Scott, career criminal and con man, and Mark, commercial banker but detached, and sister Jennifer, who fortunately came through some bad early decisions to find the right husband, career and setting to raise her son.

With the utmost affection, Judi is quite an emotional handful and can be compulsively obsessive. I was right there with Jeff for her second marriage our senior summer and the subsequent split not long after. Though Scott hasn't been seen or heard of in quite some time, in the 90s he held a bad sway over his mother, at one point requiring Jeff to contact my parents living in Denver at the time for assistance in tracking her down as Scott took his mother across Colorado racking up credit card charges. Jeff was frantic to help her and he eventually did. Jeff has always been the one to help his mother through. She seems to have episodes every few years or so.

As the publisher and editor of Omaha's leading niche media company with an alternative newsweekly (we're the Riverfront Times of Omaha by comparison), Spanish language community weekly and top online employment board, I have met, worked with and written about the widest range of people and successfully built a business approaching its 20th year with 8 full-time employees, 300+ freelancers and an audience reach of 150,000 adults. I am active in many cultural and philanthropic causes and am currently serving on the boards of the Omaha Entertainment and Arts Awards and the Mildred D. Brown Memorial Study Center, the nonprofit associated with the Omaha Star, the oldest continually running black female founded and owned newspaper in the country. Nationally I serve as the Revenue chair on the board of directors of our trade group, the Association of Alternative Newsmedia.

I rest a share of my success in business and the community from my friendship with Jeff and the earnest belief we developed together to give back to others for a better society and to build a life on honest and fair dealings. In our tradition it's Christian, specifically Jesuit. We formed this as best friends in high school, for example working together to raise about \$5,000 to Operation Others -- a holiday food delivery program delivering boxes of food to approx. 350 families -- with an original idea to sell boxer shorts and charge for notes passed to friends at other high schools, long before cell phones.

Before starting my own company I worked in residential settings handling home care and skill development with developmentally disabled adults where there was a lesson daily in human nature, both from the institutionally raised clients and the underpaid staff. I know a thing or two about people and the importance of honesty to credibility and actions to any words.

Jeff is truly one of the most considerate, giving and honestly Christian individuals I know, which is why he is one of my best friends. I would trust him with anything and I know he would do the same. While extremely disappointed at Jeff's actions, I believe he is committed and will successfully move forward in an honorable, legal fashion and we'll have no further adverse interactions with the criminal justice system. Further, that he will be an exemplary citizen and significant contributor to his community. As I have been since 1986, I will personally be in his life to know that is true.

As Jeff first grew his valet parking business in Denver, I was growing my business in Omaha. Having worked the business in Omaha and during college in Denver and Cincinnati, Jeff knew how to run a good operation, mentor college students and forge trusted business relationships with some of the most distinguished organizations in the community, including leading restaurants, non-profit events and private clubs.

Jeff has long flirted with and would ideally be suited, I believe, for a furniture or interior design career, but an avid biker, he more recently had been building a pedi-cab business, on Denver's sprawling 16th Street Mall and at various large events across that U.S. capitalizing on the interest in green transportation.

Jeff has always wanted to work in a way that leads change in positive direction. We share a trait of being a little visionary in our aspirations, not to escape reality, but to tackle it. Having worked summer jobs and plenty of house and community projects with Jeff, he's not a slacker and works extremely hard and conscientiously, whatever the task. Starting a small business is suited to both of us.

If there is anything I can help with, further answer or explain about Jeff, please do not hesitate to contact me. I am certain Jeff will return to being an outstanding member of society once this matter is behind him.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
John Heaston
Publisher/Editor
The Reader/ABM/OmahaJobs.com
2314 M Street
Omaha, NE 68107
402-547-7319